

CLARK, LINCOLN, AND WHITE PINE counties  
GROUNDWATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECT  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
SCOPING MEETING

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

On Monday, August 15, 2011

At 4:00 p.m.

At the Henderson Convention Center  
200 S. Water Street  
Henderson, Nevada

Reported by: Deborah Ann Hines, CCR #473, RPR

(Initial introductions by  
Facilitator John Godec.)

(Comments already in progress  
by Dr. Michael Dwyer.)

DR. MICHAEL DWYER: We prepared this  
document in response to an application we received in  
2004 from the Southern Nevada Water Authority to  
construct and operate a pipeline to transport  
groundwater from east central Nevada to Southern  
Nevada.

Let me be clear that no decision has been  
made by the Bureau of Land Management on this  
application yet. The National Environmental Policy  
Act requires that before we make that decision, we  
document and consider the impacts of that proposed  
action. This document is the vehicle for doing that,  
for documenting and for conveying those impacts to  
the person who will make that decision on the  
application, and that's why it's so important.

This hearing is your opportunity to help us  
make it as clear, as comprehensive and as accurate as  
it can be. Seven alternatives are analyzed in this  
document, six of them are action alternatives that  
involve various levels of production in different  
water basins where that production would occur. The

1 seventh alternative, the No Action alternative,  
2 describes the impacts if the BLM were to deny this  
3 permit and continue with current land uses.

4 Let me be clear what this hearing is not.  
5 First it's not about the allocation of water rights.  
6 That's not a decision the Bureau of Land Management  
7 can make, that's a decision that is in the hands of  
8 the State of Nevada, and more specifically the state  
9 engineer. And the state engineer has an application  
10 from the Water Authority for water rights and will be  
11 holding separate public hearings on that application  
12 beginning next month.

13 Second this meeting is not a debate. The  
14 first part of the meeting was designed to get your  
15 questions answered. This part of the meeting is  
16 about us sitting back and listening to what you have  
17 to say to help with this EIS. It's a formal public  
18 hearing in which each person who wants to make  
19 comments orally in a public forum is given the  
20 opportunity to do so. Your comments and questions  
21 will be captured by Debbie, our court reporter,  
22 verbatim and will be addressed in writing in the  
23 final environmental impact statement.

24 Please be aware if you ask a question while  
25 you're at the podium, we will note it into the record

1 and address it in the final EIS but we will not  
2 respond during the hearing. If you have a question  
3 during this hearing, you're very welcome to stand up,  
4 move to the back of the room, look for somebody that  
5 has a name tag like this (indicating) and they will  
6 help get your question answered.

7 We want to hear from everyone who has  
8 something to say tonight. As John said, we've  
9 allocated five minutes per person and he'll hold up  
10 some signs to help you manage your time. When you  
11 see the one that says time expired, please wrap up  
12 your comments.

13 If you have comments that you can't express  
14 in your five minutes, we would encourage you to  
15 please submit them in writing. They carry every bit  
16 as much weight as the comments made up here at the  
17 podium tonight.

18 We have extended the deadline for comments  
19 by 30 days. You now have until October 11th of 2011  
20 to make comments, written or oral.

21 Regarding audience participation, please  
22 treat the speaker as you would like to be treated  
23 when it's your turn at the podium. Please don't  
24 interrupt the speaker, and please note that audience  
25 comments and/or reactions will not be part of the

1 transcript. We've had a couple of people in previous  
2 meetings ask the audience for responses about who's  
3 represented here or how do you feel, you're not  
4 obligated to respond to those speakers and they won't  
5 be part of the record.

6 And finally let me explain what happens from  
7 this point forward and then we'll turn it over to  
8 you. The comments you make here tonight, along with  
9 all the comments we've collected at the other public  
10 hearings and all the comments we receive in writing,  
11 will be used to develop the final version of this  
12 environmental impact statement. We expect to have  
13 that done and available for you to look at in mid  
14 2012. It will include a comment response document  
15 that explains how we used all the comments we  
16 received.

17 When the final EIS is ready for release, a  
18 notice of availability will be published in the  
19 Federal Register, as well in local newspapers, and  
20 posted on the BLM website. A decision on that  
21 right-of-way application can be made any time 30 days  
22 after that notice of availability is published. A  
23 formal record of decision will be published in the  
24 Federal Register and local newspapers when that  
25 happens.

1           Finally I'd just like to extend my sincere  
2 thanks to all of you for being here tonight and being  
3 willing to participate in this process. I've worked  
4 on a lot of environmental impact statements in my  
5 31 years with BLM and they're always better in the  
6 end for vigorous public review and comment, so thank  
7 you.

8           With that I'll ask John to please call our  
9 first speaker.

10           FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: As I mentioned  
11 before, I will call the speakers up in the order that  
12 we received them or the order that people came in the  
13 door this evening. When you come up, I'm going to  
14 ask you to please spell your name and would you  
15 please give us your home mailing address so that we  
16 can have record of that.

17           Again we take speakers in the order in which  
18 they were received but we always defer to officials  
19 elected to public office, and we have one of those  
20 here tonight so I'm going to ask her to speak first.  
21 Tonia Means. Miss Means, are you the chairman?

22           TONIA MEANS: Chairwoman.

23           FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: The chairwoman,  
24 excuse me, of the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe.

25           TONIA MEANS: Good evening, ladies and

1 gentlemen, my name is Tonia, it's T-o-n-i-a, last  
2 name is Means, M-e-a-n-s. The address is Number 1  
3 Paiute Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89106. I come from  
4 the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe and our tribe is, you  
5 refer to as Tudinu, which means desert people.

6 First of all, I want to thank you for the  
7 opportunity to be part of the administrative process  
8 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1968 as  
9 amended for the draft environmental impact statement  
10 for the Southern Nevada Water Authority's application  
11 for the rights-of-way on the Southern Paiute Indian  
12 traditional homeland, which encompasses Clark,  
13 Lincoln and White Pine counties in Nevada.

14 Congress has mandated the Department of  
15 Interior's Bureau of Land Management to grant  
16 Southern Nevada Water Authority a right-of-way grant  
17 in Clark County and Lincoln County and also White  
18 Pine for the construction and maintenance for a 300  
19 mile plus subsurface pipeline on Southern Paiute  
20 traditional homeland administered by BLM as mandated  
21 in the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreational and  
22 Development Act of 2004. And prior to granting the  
23 SNWA the right-of-way grant, they would be subject to  
24 Congressional status and comply with those  
25 congressional statutes.

1           The concerns I have today is the draft  
2 environmental impact study failed to identify the  
3 legal questions concerning the multiple federally  
4 recognized tribes that have cultural ties to this  
5 region. For example, the federal government entered  
6 into treaties with tribes to allow non-Native  
7 Americans passage into tribes' traditional homelands  
8 but tribal leaders never, and the key word here is  
9 extinguished, our water rights to any federal  
10 government, agency or state government agency, nor  
11 has the United States Congress enacted laws  
12 transferring administrative authority to administrate  
13 Indian fiduciary trust assets to a state agency such  
14 as the Nevada State Water Engineer.

15           Federally recognized tribes maintain water  
16 as an Indian fiduciary trust asset, and the Bureau of  
17 Indian Affairs' responsibilities is to safeguard our  
18 trust assets. Prior to BLM moving forward with this  
19 proposed action, the United States Congress needs to  
20 address the Indian Fiduciary Trust Act Indian water  
21 right's legal question.

22           Nevada congressional representatives who  
23 initiated the LCCRDA failed to address Indian water  
24 right issues prior to proceeding with the provisions  
25 in the LCCRDA. It will take years for both the House

1 of Representatives and the Senate to initiate a bill  
2 to amend Indian water rights or a water settlement to  
3 the federally recognized tribes within the proposed  
4 project area.

5 But in the event BLM fails to address this  
6 legal question prior to the record of decision,  
7 tribes will appeal the BLM's ROD potential to the  
8 United States Court of Appeals in the Ninth Circuit.

9 Again, I appreciate the fact that I am able  
10 to stand here and bring this to your attention. I'm  
11 sure that there are landowners out there, ranch  
12 owners that this may affect. Well, it affects our  
13 people the same way that it's going to affect you,  
14 your private lands, your ranches and everything that  
15 may be included. I thank you very much for allowing  
16 me to speak and I hope that you all have a good  
17 evening. Thank you.

18 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Rob Mrowka.

19 ROB MROWKA: Good evening. My name is Rob  
20 Mrowka, it's spelled M-r-o-w-k-a. My address is 4261  
21 Lily Glen Court in North Las Vegas, Nevada, and I'm  
22 representing the Center for Biological Diversity for  
23 whom I've worked as an ecologist, as well as the  
24 Great Basin Water Network on whose board I serve.

25 I first want to commend the Bureau of Land

1 Management for the wonderful job that they have done  
2 in the face of I'm sure much adversity in producing  
3 this draft environmental impact statement. The  
4 statement was probably six years or more in the  
5 making, and I'm sure it was very controversial  
6 throughout the course of making it. But in that  
7 document the BLM has redeemed its partial  
8 responsibilities under the National Environmental  
9 Policy Act, or NEPA. They have disclosed the  
10 biological and the social impacts of the project. We  
11 feel they have fallen short on disclosing the  
12 economic impacts, and I'll get into that shortly.

13           Unfortunately if you read the 2,000 pages of  
14 the draft environmental impact statement, along with  
15 the 3,000 pages of appendices, you will soon learn  
16 that life as we know it in eastern Nevada will be  
17 gone within a matter of decades. The heritage that  
18 is our national heritage of central and eastern  
19 Nevada, as well as western Utah, will be destroyed by  
20 this project despite statements by the Southern  
21 Nevada Water Authority to the otherwise.

22           If you read the document closely, you'll  
23 find out that almost 200,000 acres of our beloved  
24 Great Basin shrub land that provides habitat for mule  
25 deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, sage grouse, pygmy

1 rabbits and a number of other species will be  
2 destroyed and replaced by, quote/unquote, more dry  
3 species.

4           The Southern Nevada Water Authority, as part  
5 of their mitigation plan, says we're going to aerial  
6 seed dry land species to replace this very lush shrub  
7 land habitat that exists there now. There will not  
8 be any opportunities for your great, great  
9 grandchildren to hunt mule deer in this area impacted  
10 from the pumping.

11           Along with that, over 8,000 acres of  
12 wetlands is going to be destroyed. There is going to  
13 be over 120 miles of streams, including streams that  
14 are valuable for the Bonneville cutthroat trout, a  
15 species that is protected by the Endangered Species  
16 Act, will be negatively impacted by this pumping,  
17 along with 305 springs. Many of those springs are  
18 home to endemic spring snails and other aquatic  
19 species that are found nowhere else on Earth, and  
20 they too will go extinct if this project moves  
21 forward.

22           We're also concerned about the impacts to  
23 human health. You may realize in taking a look at  
24 the map that the basins that will be pumped dry are  
25 going to be -- the same basins that are downwind from

1 the Nevada Test Site, the site of over 200 nuclear  
2 explosions in the past, nucleoloids have been bound  
3 up in the soil and are being held in place by the  
4 soil and vegetation.

5 The draft environmental impact statement  
6 discloses, however, that over 34,000 tons of dust per  
7 year will be generated by the drying out of these  
8 groundwater basins. That in turn will release in  
9 that dust the radioactive nucleoloids as well as  
10 heavy metals that have the potential to be  
11 carcinogenic and create negative health consequences  
12 to those downwind and receiving the dust. The folks,  
13 our good friends in Utah, Salt Lake City, will be the  
14 primary benefactors of this aspect.

15 The Southern Nevada Water Authority has said  
16 previously this will not be an Owens Valley. Well,  
17 the environmental impact statement begs to differ.

18 The other thing that the environmental  
19 impact statement does is that it hypothetically  
20 places where the well sites are going to be located.  
21 The models for groundwater models are very specific  
22 to their impacts depending upon where the water is  
23 pumped. So rather than waiting for the state  
24 engineer's hearing to grant or not grant water  
25 rights, and for them to disclose where the well

1 locations are going to be precisely as part of this  
2 project, the BLM and SNWA have taken up a major  
3 guessing game on what the impacts will be.

4 So the catastrophe that has been disclosed  
5 in the draft environmental impact statement is only a  
6 guess and could be much worse. We feel that it ought  
7 to be delayed until the water rights are known and  
8 the exact well locations are known so proper modeling  
9 can be done of the environmental impacts. I  
10 mentioned previously that the --

11 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Mr. Mrowka, could  
12 you wrap up please.

13 ROB MROWKA: I mentioned previously that the  
14 draft environmental impact statement failed in one  
15 case, and that is to disclose the economic  
16 consequences of the action. Nowhere in the document  
17 will you find any cost estimate for the pipeline. We  
18 know that in the past it's been said to be \$3.5  
19 billion several years ago. We're estimating that  
20 it's going to be many times that. And it's a case of  
21 the Southern Nevada Water Authority feeding at the  
22 trough of public funding. So for that reason alone  
23 we should say no to the pipeline, as well as the  
24 environmental reasons. Thank you.

25 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Danny Thompson.

1 I'm sorry, I can't read this, the Nevada State  
2 AFL-CIO.

3 DANNY THOMPSON: Good evening. My name is  
4 Danny Thompson. I'm the executive secretary of the  
5 Nevada State AFL-CIO. D-a-n-n-y, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n,  
6 2057 Symphony Avenue, Henderson, Nevada 89052.

7 As a representative of the Nevada State  
8 AFL-CIO, which is comprised of 120 different  
9 organizations statewide with over 200,000 members,  
10 we're here today to support this project.

11 You know, the economic engine of this state  
12 is driven by Clark County. And anybody that knows  
13 anything about Nevada knows that the economy in  
14 Nevada is in shambles. The concern is without this  
15 project moving forward, the entire economy of the  
16 state of Nevada is at risk because unless Clark  
17 County recovers, with almost 50 percent of the  
18 state's money generated on the Las Vegas Strip, with  
19 that being in jeopardy, the state's economy will  
20 never recover.

21 So with that, I'm not going to take the five  
22 minutes, but we're very concerned that this project  
23 move forward, especially now given, you know, what's  
24 happened in this last legislative session where, you  
25 know, our number one industry has been devastated

1 with the recession. And if this drought continues,  
2 we would find ourselves in a place that we would not  
3 want to be. And so we urge the BLM to approve the  
4 preferred alternative, and that is to approve the  
5 right-of-way for this project. Thank you.

6 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Buck Barber.

7 BUCK BARBER: My real name is Lannie, it's  
8 spelled L-a-n-n-i-e but I go by Buck Barber for most  
9 people. My address is 1401 Garnet place, that's  
10 G-a-r-n-e-t, and it's Boulder City, Nevada 89005.

11 I just want to say that I'm the president of  
12 Trout Unlimited. We have three to 400 members here  
13 locally. As a group we spent an astronomical amount  
14 of time up in the Great Basin area protecting the  
15 Bonneville cutthroat trout, helping with other  
16 projects concerning wildlife and whatnot up there and  
17 we've spent years and years. And we've been a group  
18 for 13, 14 years now and I think even towards the  
19 impact we've spend years trying to bring that place  
20 back to life again over the years that it's been  
21 decimated by a lot of different things.

22 The BLM scientists and resource experts and  
23 contract scientists that conducted the studies on  
24 impact and, you know, these people in their own words  
25 say that we don't know how much water there is. They

1 can't accurately say how much is available, or a lot  
2 of these people can't say what the clear  
3 environmental impact is on it. You know, I know  
4 people have done impact statements on Owens Valley  
5 and a lot of different areas, it's hard to call on  
6 that but, you know, like I said, here's one of your  
7 things in your own words, Groundwater: It's  
8 difficult to see, measure or even locate it  
9 accurately.

10 Another statement out here about your  
11 computer modeling which has the experts all in it, it  
12 says the computer model shows that groundwater levels  
13 will decline under all pumping alternatives.

14 So you're guaranteed a decline and a  
15 significant impact on the lands, that's the  
16 conclusion, and it's just this thing is unacceptable  
17 under those things.

18 Thousands of individuals and even  
19 well-intended government agencies like NDOW and a lot  
20 of other people, National Park Service up in Great  
21 Basin, all these people are against the draining of  
22 these waters in these valleys. These people live in  
23 these communities, they live up in the mountains, the  
24 people at Great Basin National Forest, they live  
25 there, they see what's going on.

1           Realistically the negative affects of  
2 proceeding with the withdrawal of water might not  
3 show for decades. Owens Valley is an example. It  
4 took 10 to 13 years before anybody really ever saw  
5 the impact of this and then it's too late. And now  
6 it will take centuries for it to recover, if that  
7 happens.

8           We can draw an acre this year and then we  
9 ask for two more acres next year, I'm talking about  
10 millions of acres of water feet, we ask for a little  
11 bit and look what we've done. We haven't done  
12 anything, we've drawn an acre. And then, well, we  
13 can do a couple more, because we asked for ten but we  
14 only asked for two and we get three, it doesn't sound  
15 so bad. But it takes decades for that impact to  
16 happen. All of a sudden two drought years and you've  
17 got the base trout, or whatever, you know the dace  
18 fish or whatever is up there is decimated. You don't  
19 get it back anymore. It's gone.

20           And it's nice to be optimistic about the  
21 issue, but the potential environmental impact to go  
22 forward isn't worth the risk. And for me I hate to  
23 see billions of dollars spent later to undo a wrong  
24 because, I mean, as a conservation organization we're  
25 a cold water conservancy. It says trout but we have

1 lots of fly fishermen and whatnot there. We have  
2 150,000 or so members nationwide. We have three, 400  
3 here.

4 If this gets in, years later now we're going  
5 to be spending millions of dollars to reverse this.  
6 All we're going to have is a bunch of rusted pipeline  
7 up there if we find something that's -- some little  
8 critter out there that says, oh, it's gone, okay.  
9 Well, we're going to have to protect that. It's not  
10 going to be there. So with that being said, a No  
11 Action is called for. And I thank you for letting me  
12 speak.

13 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Hank Vogler.

14 HANK VOGLER: Hank Vogler, V-o-g-l-e-r,  
15 HCR 33 Box 33920, Ely, Nevada 89301.

16 I live in North Spring Valley. I find it  
17 quite incredulous or fortuitous that any biologist  
18 worth his onions can walk across my front yard and  
19 come up with half a dozen endangered species, a dozen  
20 endangered plants, animals, insects, reptiles. And  
21 we have a pipeline that's 300 miles long and there's  
22 no problem. No lizards, no sages, no problem. We  
23 can do it. That's pretty unbelievable. So if you  
24 think that's a little hypocritical, I do.

25 So we have to move on from that. We can't

1 predict what's going to happen until we put a hole in  
2 the ground and start pulling water out. I don't  
3 believe if you put a straw in a glass that the water  
4 on the bottom comes up without the water on the top  
5 falling.

6 We're going to have dust. We're going to  
7 have entire plant communities die. And most of all  
8 the one endangered species that you folks missed when  
9 you did your wonderful environmental impact statement  
10 was me. Sheep herders. There's only 12 of us left  
11 in the state. We've had a 97 percent reduction in  
12 our population of numbers. Should one sheep herder  
13 or 12 sheep herders in the state of Nevada stop Las  
14 Vegas? Absolutely not. But once you own 51 percent  
15 of the water rights in the basin, the other 49  
16 percent have to go along no matter what.

17 Well, that's where we are. I'm collateral  
18 damage yet I'm the canary in the coal mine. It will  
19 be my sheep herder that comes off the mountain and  
20 says no puede, no water. We don't have any water up  
21 there. I can't do it. So how are we going to do it?  
22 How are we going to mitigate those kind of damages?  
23 There's nothing in here for the economic impact of  
24 me.

25 The Taylor Grazing Act, which was the father

1 of practically the BLM, was a bunch of ranchers that  
2 got together and said there was a finite amount of  
3 grass out there, a finite resource, so they got  
4 together and the BLM evolved out of the Taylor  
5 Grazing Act of 1934. And here we are. We have NEPA,  
6 we have FLPMA, we have acronym-itis with all the  
7 different acronyms that we use. But here we are.  
8 And we're going to have some more yet. And where are  
9 we getting?

10 If you look in the dictionary about  
11 cooperation, coordination, consideration and prior  
12 rights and prior this and prior right and custom and  
13 culture, you look all those things up, and I realize  
14 I only got through the sixth grade, however it was  
15 the six best years of my life, and you cannot do this  
16 without impacting, but you cannot just absolutely  
17 ignore the people that you're going to impact. You  
18 have got to step up. You've got to say, hey, we hope  
19 this will work. We hope if we go up there and have  
20 some PJ removal, take some Tamarisk off that drains  
21 into the Colorado, maybe do some desalinization.

22 You know, the first Ford car they ever built  
23 or the first automobile is not as handy as the one we  
24 have now. So if the more water you desalinate, the  
25 more chances you have in making it cheaper. But when

1     you drill that pipeline, the day you open that  
2     pipeline, if we go back to the same growth that we  
3     had in Las Vegas, the net gain to Las Vegas the day  
4     you cut the ribbon on the pipeline, you're out of  
5     water.

6             Can you go back to the Assembly and the  
7     Senate in Carson City and say, Doggone-it, we  
8     underestimated how much we could use? What do you  
9     think we ought to do? Spend 6 or \$7 billion to go to  
10    desalinization or spiderweb the rest of the 16 rural  
11    counties and take all the water, and then you split a  
12    little bit up with Reno and we'll void the entire  
13    basins of Nevada of the human element. For what?  
14    For what.

15            There's a finite amount of water, and the  
16    last time I looked the Pacific Ocean was bigger than  
17    Cumins Lake. Cumins Lake is I think the biggest in  
18    White Pine County. But it looked a little bigger the  
19    last time I saw it.

20            So why don't we get real. If we're going to  
21    spend this kind of money, why don't we spend it on  
22    something that will create just as many jobs for you,  
23    sir, and your people, keep Vegas, the engine of  
24    Nevada, growing but also protect the second and third  
25    other industries in this state. The second industry

1 in this state is mining, the third industry is  
2 agriculture. And you're going to throw those out,  
3 completely away for a one horse town, a one horse  
4 show. And you don't have to do that. There are  
5 other ways to do it. And this is definitely not the  
6 way. And the taxpayers of this state and this nation  
7 should not have to pay for this absolutely Owens  
8 Valley on steroids. Thank you.

9 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Vinny Spotleson.

10 VINNY SPOTLESON: Hi. Vinny Spotleson,  
11 V-i-n-n-y, S-p-o-t-l-e-s-o-n, 2638 Douglas Circle,  
12 Henderson, Nevada 89074. Hi, my name is Vinny  
13 Spotleson, I'm also a member of Sierra Club.

14 When I was in elementary school my family  
15 moved to Henderson, and as a young child in the 1990s  
16 I can remember laws in front of every home, people  
17 watering in the hottest part of the summer and little  
18 creeks flowing down the gutters of almost every  
19 street.

20 Since then Southern Nevada Water Authority's  
21 Water Smart program has done amazing things from  
22 providing incentives that my parents used to  
23 xeroscape our lawn to implementing aggressive, smart  
24 drought restrictions that curb water usage in  
25 important ways as well as an advertising campaign to

1 educate the public on the importance of saving water.

2           What I didn't know as a kid, and what most  
3 people in Nevada don't know, is that the largest  
4 private landowner in the state is a multimillion  
5 dollar company called Vidler. And what does Vidler  
6 specialize in? Not oil, gold or gaming, but private  
7 water rights. Vidler buys water rights around  
8 Nevada, often from former agricultural grazing land,  
9 and converts that water into industrial use. With  
10 agricultural usage, some amount of water will return  
11 to the aquifer because most of the water is being  
12 used on site. But there's a problem when Vidler  
13 sucks water away from land often to cities'  
14 industrial uses where it gets burned in the air to  
15 create steam.

16           According to the overwhelming majority of  
17 the scientists, water vapor is in itself a mild  
18 greenhouse gas, and thus this use not only takes  
19 water out of the ground, springs, rivers and other  
20 down gradient users' wells but further perpetuates  
21 and accelerates global warming. And who is the main  
22 contractor of Southern Nevada Water Authority's at  
23 least \$3.2 billion pipeline? Well, this morning I  
24 called Dave Merril of Vidler water company and asked  
25 him what role the company will play in the

1 groundwater development program, and he refused to  
2 disclose anything about Vidler's role in the project.

3 But it is very clear from Vidler's website  
4 that the company has strategically acquired  
5 groundwater resources in the Dry Lake Valley and  
6 Lincoln County for beneficial use. What we have here  
7 is a massive transfer of wealth and resources, our  
8 dollars as water users in Southern Nevada, to one of  
9 the richest and best positioned corporations in the  
10 state.

11 Humans can live without electricity. We can  
12 go over a month without food but we cannot live more  
13 than a couple days, or down here a couple hours,  
14 without fresh water. This project helps take the  
15 most important resource of the world and further  
16 concentrates it in the hands of a private corporation  
17 which refuses to answer basic questions about what  
18 it's going to do with the water.

19 Southern Nevada Water Authority has many  
20 arguments as to why we need this pipeline. They say  
21 we are too dependent on a single source of water, but  
22 acknowledged that they can save more than 184,000  
23 acre feet that this project would use through  
24 aggressive conservation programs. This is the driest  
25 desert in North America. We should have the

1 strongest building codes for water efficiency in  
2 North American.

3 They say that we need this water for our  
4 economic future but billions of gallons are still  
5 burnt in the air at giant fossil fuel power plants  
6 like Reid Gardner every year, while the operating of  
7 these power plants take our money through electricity  
8 bills instead of creating jobs in renewable energy.

9 And perhaps the most misguided and  
10 short-sighted claim that Southern Nevada Water  
11 Authority uses is that investors and creditors are  
12 looking to see if we get this water in order to bring  
13 their money to Nevada. Southern Nevada Water  
14 Authority made a lot of money during the boom by  
15 selling new hook-ups to home builders. They argue  
16 that this sort of growth can begin again if they get  
17 this water, as if investors in Wall Street firms are  
18 stupid enough to again start pouring their money into  
19 collateralized debt obligations, and credit defaults  
20 go up on sub-prime mortgage bonds in Las Vegas  
21 Valley. That's not going to happen. That's the old  
22 economic paradigm, and look at what it resulted in.

23 Investors are looking at which communities  
24 are the most water efficient. They're searching for  
25 communities that still don't waste the majority of

1 their water on landscaping and fountains, communities  
2 that implement aggressive building codes and  
3 communities that find ways to stop defecating in the  
4 most precious resource in the world. Retrofitting  
5 old homes, businesses and toilets will create tons of  
6 jobs, millions nationwide.

7 Finally, the draft environmental impact  
8 statement, as they said, points out the disastrous  
9 effects that this project will have on the region.  
10 And this project is a great example of why we need  
11 the National Environmental Policy Act. It was  
12 designed to prevent projects like this from being  
13 built.

14 Please reject this project. Southern Nevada  
15 Water Authority has proven its ability to expand  
16 water saving renewable energy. They have proven that  
17 they know how to conserve massive amounts of water,  
18 and it will be very beneficial to our economy and our  
19 livelihood if we work with them to expand their  
20 conservation programs to distribute wealth and water  
21 instead of letting it further aggregate in the hands  
22 of Vidler. Please select the No Action alternative.  
23 Thank you.

24 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Sheila Stirling.

25 SHEILA STIRLING: My name is Sheila Z.

1 Stirling, S-h-e-i-l-a, Z like zoo, Stirling,  
2 S-t-i-r-l-i-n-g, and I'm at 4132 South Rainbow  
3 Boulevard, Number 465, Las Vegas, Nevada 89103.

4 I'm part of the Climate Project and I speak  
5 about environmental impact. I don't have a lot of  
6 legal jargon today nor do I have a lot of political  
7 facts about this project, but what I do have is the  
8 right, no, I have the responsibility as a citizen to  
9 speak for those who have no voice. This groundwater  
10 grab project will negatively impact hundreds of miles  
11 of desert, the delicate balance between life and  
12 death for all plant life, and all animal life of the  
13 Nevada desert will be thrown from its natural course.

14 We don't have a water problem in this  
15 country, we have a distribution problem. Why don't  
16 we build a pipeline from the flooded Midwest, they're  
17 drowning out there. Why don't we build a pipeline  
18 from there to here? We'd be helping our neighbor  
19 states and we'd be helping Nevada.

20 Let's be smart and not destroy the desert  
21 ecosystem. Let's not turn the beautiful wild desert  
22 into a barren wasteland, because it's really time  
23 that we all think about sustainability and set aside  
24 greed and grab for higher earnings in the corporate  
25 end line.

1           Now it may sound very idealistic to you but  
2   if we drain this groundwater and kill the desert, we  
3   will not get a second chance to save this fragile and  
4   beautiful ecosystem. It's really time to become good  
5   custodians and move away from devouring and  
6   destroying everything we get near. Extinction is  
7   permanent. We must not let this project go forward.  
8   I vote no on this project. Thank you very much.

9           FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Max Chipman.

10          MAX CHIPMAN: My name is Max Chipman, that's  
11   M-a-x, C-h-i-p-m-a-n. I have two homes here in  
12   Nevada, one address is Post Office Box 50, Baker,  
13   Nevada; the other home is 951 Finchwood Lane, Las  
14   Vegas, Nevada 89110.

15          What I would like to address my little time  
16   here is there's three things that's very critical to  
17   me, to my health and to living here on Earth. One is  
18   the quality of food I eat, one is the quality of  
19   water I drink, and the other is the quality of air I  
20   breathe.

21          I am very, very, very concerned when you  
22   drain the water from my Baker, Nevada home and you  
23   create an Owens Valley or a Death Valley, then we  
24   have the problems we have there that we have in Las  
25   Vegas that I'm involved with. I'm in environmental

1 testing, that's my business here in Las Vegas. And  
2 our bad air days here in Las Vegas is dust related.

3 In Baker, Nevada, I don't have dust related  
4 problems. But if you take that water and create an  
5 Owens Valley, create a Death Valley up there, yes, I  
6 will have dust problems. And it will be, I'm sure  
7 you have seen on television here three or four weeks  
8 ago that dust storm in Phoenix where everybody was  
9 demanded to stay inside, not to go outside and  
10 breathe the air. That storm didn't come from lush  
11 landscaping, it came from the desert. It came from  
12 deserts like the Owens Valley and the Death Valley.  
13 That's what we must eliminate.

14 Now as a businessman here in Vegas there's  
15 no question we do need water for our growth. We need  
16 to bring more water into Las Vegas so that the  
17 Southern Nevada Water Authority can pump more water  
18 down the Sloan drainage ditch so that they can create  
19 more mosquitoes, more bugs that bite and create a  
20 problem.

21 Now it is true that we do need some water.  
22 As I talked with one gentleman earlier today, all I  
23 ever hear about is the water coming down the Colorado  
24 River. That is our water that we use here. My  
25 question is is that the only place we get the water?

1 I am originally from Utah. If you've never made the  
2 friendship cruise down the Green River, up the  
3 Colorado River, then you'll have no idea how much  
4 water is there. Maybe 40 percent of the water coming  
5 down the Colorado River comes down the Green River.

6 Where is the headwaters of the Green River?  
7 The headwaters of the Green River is within 30,  
8 40 miles of the headwater of the Clear River, the  
9 headwaters of the Jackson Hole River and the  
10 headwaters of the Columbia River. That is excess  
11 water running to the ocean that should be then moved  
12 down to Las Vegas.

13 Here in Baker, Nevada, we do not have any  
14 excess water to be pumped down here and wasted in the  
15 Sloan drainage ditch. Excessive water runs to the  
16 ocean. We do not have any water in that area running  
17 to the ocean. What we need to do is take a look at,  
18 really fast, like the headwaters of the Green River,  
19 which fill Flaming Gorge. I water skied on Flaming  
20 Gorge. It's at huge facility. At the moment it's  
21 full. I don't see a Pat Mulroy walking around saying  
22 how low Flaming Gorge is.

23 I just think that we need to take a look at  
24 what's going on. We really need to take a look at  
25 the infrastructure that we have in the water here in

1 the country and redo the water so that we have it  
2 where we need it. And I thank you for allowing me to  
3 voice my opinion. And let me tell you, water is  
4 critical. Thank you.

5 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Pat Brunson.

6 PAT BRUNSON: My name is Pat Brunson,  
7 B-r-u-n-s-o-n. I live at 879 Ripple, R-i-p-p-l-e,  
8 Way, Las Vegas, Nevada 89110.

9 There's an inadequate analysis in the report  
10 of the actual costs of the pipeline including the  
11 sources of funding. By the way, I am an advocate in  
12 Food and Water Watch, which is how I got involved  
13 with this.

14 The Southern Nevada Water Authority is  
15 pushing the project to be approved but they can't  
16 tell where the \$3 billion budget for this project  
17 will come from. Some portion of this will have to  
18 come from public funding, which will eventually mean  
19 higher bills for ratepayers and taxpayers in the  
20 state. This will undoubtedly have a disproportionate  
21 impact on low income communities in Las Vegas.

22 Why isn't a physical analysis included in  
23 the DEIS? And I am a low income person that will be  
24 heavily impacted with this. My 20-year-old disabled  
25 daughter and I live on \$126 a month. I can barely

1     afford the water that I pay for now.

2             What is the purpose and need of this  
3     enormous project if Las Vegas can't even adequately  
4     manage its own water supply? Water conservation  
5     measures in this city have been inefficient. Two  
6     weeks ago I called, I live in a housing complex that  
7     I rent at, I called the water department, I called my  
8     homeowners association and we called -- we all called  
9     the water department for about 15 to 20 calls that  
10    somehow never got on the books for a seepage in my  
11    street in the complex that turned out to be a lake  
12    last Monday.

13            Last Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday the water  
14    department finally came out to fix the problem, but  
15    when they fixed one portion, the next portion broke.  
16    And we're still waiting for the rest of it to break  
17    because the builders built it cheap. They got jobs  
18    but we have to pay for the end result.

19            The DEIS is a highly technical document with  
20    more than 1200 pages, and more than 2,000 pages if  
21    you include appendices. The agency had more than six  
22    years to prepare this document, yet only four months  
23    of approval time have been granted to review the  
24    project. Will the BLM extend the comment period to  
25    allow a full six-month review?

1           Also there could be drops in the water table  
2 as much as ten feet or more in many parts of Nevada.  
3 This means that any vegetation that has shallow roots  
4 would wither and die, and with them many creatures,  
5 large and small, who depend on this vegetation for  
6 food, shelter and water will die. This could result  
7 in a huge dustbowl impact throughout Northern Nevada  
8 and even parts of Utah.

9           This massive project will have a major human  
10 impact. Families who depend on well water may find  
11 that their well has gone dry when the water table  
12 drops. Local businesses and Native American  
13 communities will suffer, and ranchers may lose their  
14 livelihoods.

15           I urge the BLM to support a No Action  
16 alternative which is the only option that will not  
17 have a harmful impact on the diversity and  
18 productivity of public lands. Thank you.

19           FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Dundee Jones.

20           DUNDEE JONES: Dundee Jones, D-u-n-d-e-e,  
21 J-o-n-e-s. I live at 433 Summit Drive, Henderson,  
22 Nevada. That's S-u-m-m-i-t, Summit Drive, and 89002.

23           And I'm here today representing selfishly  
24 myself as a trout fisherman, as a trout fisherman and  
25 a visitor to much of the areas that this will have

1     impact on. And I just wanted to give a little  
2     firsthand experience of what I have seen up there.  
3     And I know how delicate the water table is because I  
4     have been there from one week to the next, I've been  
5     there from the beginning of the season to the end of  
6     the season and I see that water fluctuate as the  
7     farmers just use it to irrigate their fields. So I  
8     know that that is very delicate up there.

9             And I also want to give some credit to Pat  
10    Mulroy from this article that was in the RJ that  
11    says, I will quote this, She had an idea that borders  
12    on zany. A massive Public Works proposal to divert  
13    water from flood stricken regions of the Midwest to  
14    aquifers as far west as Colorado so that they may be  
15    tapped by people who draw from the Colorado River  
16    basin. That strategy would allow others, including  
17    Southern Nevadans, to get more water out of the  
18    river.

19            And it was a zany -- it was a doozy of an  
20    idea when she suggested that, and the idea is to  
21    build diversion dams from the floor control and move  
22    the water to aquifers beneath the farmlands of Iowa,  
23    Nebraska, Kansas to Colorado. If Colorado farmers  
24    can't use it, then we can just drain more off of that  
25    for Nevada and downstream.

1           But the way it's going on now, it doesn't  
2           sound good. And I have respect for the people in the  
3           north. I side with them that this is not a good  
4           idea. It's a good idea to plan for water for our  
5           growth in the future, but this is not the best way to  
6           do it. I think this is a zany idea but it's  
7           meritorious, and there should be some research done  
8           on following up on this idea as well as the  
9           desalinization.

10           So I'd like to see the Bureau of Land  
11           Management do more in that regard. I do like your  
12           posters around because you have indicated there are  
13           negative impacts, and that is what I think most  
14           people here today are here for. So we vote against  
15           it. That's fly fishermen avid enthusiasts. I'm also  
16           a member of Trout Unlimited and the Fly Fishing  
17           Federation.

18           FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Mandi Lindsay.

19           MANDI LINDSAY: Good evening. I'm Mandi  
20           Lindsay representing the Associated General  
21           Contractors of Las Vegas. My name is spelled  
22           M-a-n-d-i, L-i-n-d-s-a-y. My address is 8835 Chapman  
23           Point, Las Vegas, Nevada.

24           As I stated earlier, I'm here on behalf of  
25           the Associated General Contractors of Las Vegas and

1 would like to express our support of the Southern  
2 Nevada Water Authority's groundwater development  
3 project. There is no question that Southern Nevada's  
4 construction industry must have a reliable and  
5 dependable water supply.

6 For the past decade we've witnessed the  
7 adverse effects of drought and realize how important  
8 it is for Southern Nevada to protect itself from  
9 drought conditions. Beneath this project is severe  
10 economic and social consequences that could occur in  
11 Southern Nevada should the groundwater development  
12 project not proceed are enormous.

13 Southern Nevada, as it's been stated  
14 earlier, is Nevada's economic engine. It must be  
15 stressed that this engine cannot drive new economic  
16 development opportunities benefitting the entire  
17 state without the precious resource of water. I urge  
18 the BLM to permit the Southern Nevada Water  
19 Authority's groundwater development project to move  
20 forward by granting its right-of-way. The Las Vegas  
21 construction industry, the Southern Nevada community,  
22 and the broader state depend on this project. So I  
23 trust that a fair decision will be made to ensure  
24 that Nevada will be able to prosper in the future.  
25 Thank you.

1 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Brian McAnallen.

2 BRIAN MCANALLEN: Brian McAnallen,  
3 M-c-A-n-a-l-l-e-n, 2822 Glen Court, Las Vegas, 89135.  
4 I'm the vice president of government affairs for the  
5 Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce and I'm here on behalf  
6 of our 6,000 member businesses, thousands of small,  
7 medium and large companies that employ over 230,000  
8 Nevadans.

9 I'm here to state the chamber support of the  
10 Southern Nevada Water Authority to obtain  
11 rights-of-way across land managed by the BLM. The  
12 chamber has traditionally supported long-term and  
13 short-term supply augmentation and planning for water  
14 delivery systems and sources and how to meet the  
15 anticipated future water needs of the Las Vegas  
16 Valley.

17 The availability and sustainability of  
18 resources for quality water are essential to our  
19 residents. And beyond the importance of water to all  
20 of us as residents, the business community relies on  
21 adequate and stable water supplies for operations and  
22 development in order to support a vital economy.

23 If granted, the rights-of-way will support  
24 the development of unused groundwater, and this water  
25 is needed for Southern Nevada Water Authority to

1 diversify its water resources, ensure existing and  
2 projected future water demands are met.

3           Southern Nevadans have answered the call  
4 already to conserve and have decreased our water  
5 dependency by a third. And while we've had one good  
6 year of snow pack, that doesn't ensure a permanent,  
7 adequate supply of water. We need to prepare for the  
8 delivery system needs of tomorrow for our community,  
9 and that's good public policy.

10           The economic slowdown over the past few  
11 years has been especially challenging for businesses  
12 in the state of Nevada, and we need to have a  
13 dependable, sustainable water supply, and that's a  
14 key to our economic recovery and attracting new  
15 investment in Nevada.

16           And I'd just like to point out that this is  
17 one issue where the business community and the union  
18 organizations stand firmly together in support of  
19 this. We need to do everything we can to help our  
20 economy rebound and flourish again, and this  
21 sustainable delivery of water system is the way to  
22 help that happen.

23           Please consider the extent and scope of the  
24 negative economic impact that would take place with  
25 residents and businesses if Clark County does not

1 have reliable access to water. Thank you.

2 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Dean Baker.

3 DEAN BAKER: Dean Baker, Baker Ranch, Baker,  
4 Nevada 89311, Box 10.

5 My main point tonight is to say that I  
6 believe the BLM is not looking at their history, the  
7 history of Department of Interior. BLM is the Bureau  
8 of Land Management, the creation of the land for  
9 putting agriculture and livestock, particularly the  
10 BLM, Taylor Grazing Act, to make it so it was usable  
11 and productive in my life.

12 In World War II I've been very connected  
13 watching the BLM make us more productive, taking  
14 better care of the land and do it.

15 Now when you say that it is the state  
16 engineer's only thing to take care of the water  
17 things, your job has been to take care of the land,  
18 to save the land. Now if you allow this pipeline,  
19 you're ruining the land. So does that satisfy your  
20 history as the creation of your land agency? I do  
21 not think it will. My experience says that that is  
22 as wrong as it can be. You may not think you should  
23 control the water, but the pipeline kills the land,  
24 the livestock and things.

25 One of the things that it helped was get it

1 so that this small percentage in the United States  
2 pays for its food is because of the productivity of  
3 agricultural lands in this country. But to do that  
4 you can't take the water away from the land and do  
5 it.

6 One of the things that I'm most bothered by  
7 is looking at your book in this section here where it  
8 shows the drawdown levels. Your drawdown levels for  
9 Snake Valley show essentially there is very little  
10 affect, zero affect. But let me tell you about our  
11 experience in Snake Valley. One of the real simple  
12 ones is the Needlepoint well or Needlepoint Spring.  
13 It was created years ago, or it was not created, it  
14 was there when I first came to that area. The three  
15 Cs in the depression put the water in the good  
16 facilities. No one there has any memory of it not  
17 being there.

18 In 2001 there was a development of water in  
19 that area from some other old land that was never  
20 productive. What that did was draw this spring down  
21 below the level where that spring no longer ran.  
22 Seventeen wild horses were killed on that. That  
23 developer developed the water on that land so he  
24 could sell it to Southern Nevada Water Authority.

25 Baker Ranch has developed and pumped water.

1 It draws down water. We have dried up springs and  
2 other things. Our neighbors have dried up springs  
3 and other things, so we watch that very clearly. So  
4 to put in this book that nothing has to be considered  
5 until you have a ten-foot drawdown.

6 Now we talked about the Burbank Meadows.  
7 The Burbank Meadow is right below that Needlepoint  
8 Springs. What is the Burbank Meadow? It was a place  
9 first settled by white man. But what happened before  
10 white man got there or when he got there? It was  
11 totally covered with the Indians living in that area.  
12 There was fish. There were wildlife of all kinds.  
13 There was plants growing. So it was very productive  
14 for the Indians and the many that lived there.

15 Now this Needlepoint Spring development of  
16 water that's right above there, Needlepoint Springs  
17 is one of the things, has the same test of water  
18 ingredients and whatnot that's coming out of the  
19 spring that serves the Burbank Meadows.

20 Burbank Meadows are home for about 2,000  
21 mother cows and their calves raising them through the  
22 summer now. It also produces other things. That  
23 spring drying up means it's taking water from there  
24 also. Those pumps are also lowering the Needlepoint  
25 Springs. When they talk about the ten foot drawdown

1 being where, they have to look at things. The  
2 Burbank Meadows, if you go there in the summer, there  
3 are solid grass growing all over the meadow and  
4 everything. The cows are living off of it. But when  
5 the fall comes, and you take the cows off and we  
6 don't spread the water on it, it just flows. The  
7 water comes to the surface and it gets totally  
8 covered with ice because of the water coming.

9 That area has been an area where the white  
10 man has been. For instance, the Donner family, who  
11 still own part of it, came there, first listed in  
12 Millard County Courthouse as coming in 1862. So that  
13 was created and used for long before there was states  
14 of Nevada or Utah, and those rights are all things  
15 that will be taken away and destroyed with the  
16 drawdown.

17 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Irene Porter.  
18 Miss Porter, are you here?

19 Virginia Valentine.

20 VIRGINIA VALENTINE: I'm Virginia Valentine,  
21 V-a-l-e-n-t-i-n-e. My address is P.O. Box 81526, Las  
22 Vegas, Nevada 89180. I am with the Nevada Resort  
23 Association.

24 I think as others have said, and I think you  
25 all know, that tourism-related businesses make up the

1 largest sector of Nevada's economy. In addition to  
2 being the state's largest employer, the industry is  
3 also the state's largest tax contributor. By just  
4 about every measure: Jobs, tax revenue, capital  
5 investment, the casino industry does provide the  
6 state with a great deal of economic benefit.

7 Southern Nevada's economy is dependent on  
8 the hotel, gaming and convention industry, and the  
9 viability of the Clark County economy is dependent on  
10 the volume of visitors to the region. A water  
11 shortage in Southern Nevada would have a devastating  
12 impact on the gaming and resort industry as well as  
13 the state economy. That's why the Nevada Resort  
14 Association fully supports the Southern Nevada Water  
15 Authority's groundwater development project, and we  
16 feel that while the draft environmental impact  
17 statement does address some of the economic impacts  
18 to Lincoln and White Pine, we are concerned that it  
19 doesn't address the ramifications in Clark County on  
20 the economy should the project not go forward.

21 We believe that the SNWA should be allowed  
22 to secure the rights-of-way from the Bureau of Land  
23 Management, and thank you for the opportunity to make  
24 these comments to you this evening.

25 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Brian Unguren. I

1     hope I'm pronouncing that correctly.

2                 BRIAN UNGUREN:   Yeah, that's right.   My name  
3     is Brian Unguren, U-n-g-u-r-e-n.   Address is 518  
4     Primrose Hill Avenue, Las Vegas 89178.   I'm here  
5     today speaking as a private citizen.   I'm an active  
6     community member, a homeowner and a longtime resident  
7     of Southern Nevada.   And I've actually followed this  
8     issue quite closely for some time now and I  
9     appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak on it.

10                It's been stated several times tonight, we  
11    all know that Clark County is the economic engine of  
12    this state.   I think we contribute around 70 or 80  
13    percent to the state's budget.   And everyone also  
14    knows that the water in this state belongs to the  
15    people in the state, not the people just in the  
16    county where the water is located.

17                So essentially my family and I have lived  
18    here in Clark County for quite some time and we have  
19    just as much right to the water as the people who  
20    live in White Pine or Lincoln counties.   And from  
21    what I understand, they have no plans to put that  
22    water to use.   They just don't want us to have it for  
23    whatever reason.

24                As someone who pays taxes in Clark County,  
25    it amazes me that people in the rural counties who

1 benefit from my tax dollars are complaining so much  
2 about sending water where it is needed most. If  
3 Clark County were to run out of water, the impacts  
4 would be felt across the entire state, especially the  
5 rural counties. People also say that when Las Vegas  
6 gets water from up north, it will dry everything up  
7 in those valleys, the only problem is they don't have  
8 any evidence that this will actually happen. Their  
9 trivial concerns are based upon emotion and rhetoric.

10 I see the comments made in the articles and  
11 on the message boards, and I can't believe the amount  
12 of disdain that they have for Southern Nevadans just  
13 because we live in Las Vegas and Henderson and  
14 Boulder City. People in Clark County also love this  
15 state and this country and should be allowed to use  
16 water that isn't being used to support our economy.  
17 Please don't forget that not building the project  
18 will have a huge impact on this state, and the BLM  
19 needs to take that into consideration when they issue  
20 their decision. Thank you again for allowing me to  
21 comment.

22 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Steve Rypka.

23 STEVE RYPKA: Hello, my name is Steve Rypka,  
24 that's R-y-p-k-a, 2194 Clearwater Lake Drive,  
25 Henderson, Nevada 89044.

1           And there's no lake on my street, even  
2   though it's named that way. The reason I mention  
3   that because it's common that a lot of developers in  
4   Southern Nevada like to name places after things that  
5   we all like, like lakes and rivers and so forth,  
6   because we value that as human beings. We value the  
7   natural world and what it represents. It's our  
8   heritage. The Earth is our one true home and we need  
9   to honor that.

10           You know, a city like Las Vegas is here  
11   because of some amazing engineering feats but we  
12   actually did a really good job in creating Lake Mead  
13   and I think that we have a right to use that water  
14   efficiently. We're not really using it efficiency.  
15   We can do a lot more with what we have. And I think  
16   it's a really big mistake to look at expanding the  
17   footprint of Las Vegas ever outward taking additional  
18   resources from people and other living things that  
19   are already living in harmony with those resources.  
20   It's just a moral mistake. It is the wrong thing to  
21   do.

22           So in case you don't know where I'm going  
23   with this, I'm definitely in favor of the No Action  
24   option. I want to be clear on that before I forget.

25           You know, we have so much ability here to

1 create. Las Vegas is known for being very  
2 innovative. We reinvented ourselves many times. You  
3 know, the business community, the contractors, the  
4 labor forces want to see economic activity. That's  
5 important. We need a strong economy but there are  
6 other ways to do that.

7           If we continue on the path that we're  
8 looking at doing this pipeline, that's kind of like  
9 using the same logic that got us into a problem in  
10 the first place. What if we looked at going in the  
11 other direction towards a sustainable option where we  
12 use, if we're going to spend money, let's use it to  
13 seed start-up businesses to create innovation, real  
14 change in how we use water effectively and  
15 efficiently.

16           We could create new businesses, we could  
17 create new industries, we could become a leader in a  
18 global crisis and address a real need around the  
19 world and start exporting the knowledge and the  
20 innovations that we come up with here and become  
21 known as a center for water efficiency. That's what  
22 I would propose to address the economic issue, and at  
23 the same time we allow our natural systems to  
24 continue to thrive and maintain the balance that  
25 they've had for hundreds of thousands of years.

1           It honors the native people and their lands.  
2   We don't have to step on any toes by expanding our  
3   footprint. You know, if every city continues to  
4   expand its footprint, pretty soon we're all stepping  
5   on each others toes.

6           Now the other thing that I'm not clear about  
7   in the draft EIS, because I haven't read every page  
8   of it, is are we looking at the economic and  
9   environmental impacts of the actual city of Las Vegas  
10   in the long term, because sustainability is all about  
11   looking at long-term, thriving and survivability. I  
12   mean, what would the impact be, for example, if we  
13   went ahead with this project? We know it's going to  
14   drive growth, it's going to drive short-term profits  
15   for a few industries, for a few companies, for some  
16   businesses. Yeah, it will be great for a while.

17           And let's say that that growth results in a  
18   valley full of five million people instead of two  
19   million, and now what if we, you know, made the  
20   mistake, actually it's not even a mistake because we  
21   know in the EIS report it says it's going to draw  
22   down the water, so eventually that's not a  
23   sustainable resource. It's a desert. There's not an  
24   unlimited water supply laying around under the ground  
25   in Nevada.

1           So down the road, 20 years, 30 years or a  
2           hundred years, that water supply runs out, but we've  
3           got millions more people here. What is the impact of  
4           the decisions that we make now on future generations?  
5           We're only going to give them a bigger problem to  
6           deal with in the future. That is not a sustainable  
7           option.

8           So I think the only real option that makes  
9           sense, as human beings, from a moral standpoint, from  
10          an economic standpoint, and just to look at living,  
11          you know, leaving a legacy for future generations  
12          that we can all live with, is to take the No Action  
13          option. Thank you very much.

14          FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Wayne Bliss.

15          WAYNE BLISS: My name is Wayne Bliss, that's  
16          B-l-i-s-s. Ignorance is bliss. 5459 Evelyn Street,  
17          Las Vegas, 89120.

18          The No Action alternative in this EIS is the  
19          only justifiable position that we can take. This  
20          project is flat wrong. Should never been in.

21          Nevada Test Site is probably the most  
22          studied hydrological area in this country and we  
23          don't know what's happening with the water up there.  
24          So regardless of all the beautiful computer models, I  
25          don't think they tell us the true picture. This is

1 merely a water grab to sustain the growth of Las  
2 Vegas.

3 Las Vegas is a city that has no basis for  
4 existence. It's not an agricultural town, it's not a  
5 seaport, it's not a mining town. The only thing we  
6 do here is mine people's pocketbooks, and that is not  
7 a sustainable situation. We can take the last  
8 speaker's option and we cut off gaming, okay, but  
9 what would happen to us then?

10 Agriculture in the basins that we're talking  
11 about here sustains the livestock industry now and  
12 some mining. Most of that production is to support  
13 livestock and to feed pet horses, for those in town  
14 who have horses. I suggest that the acres and the  
15 water that is there now and supports the livestock  
16 industry that's for human consumption may in the  
17 future.

18 The models here trying to reach out 200  
19 years, within that 200 years we may well need those  
20 acres and that water to produce food for the human  
21 base, and that's well within the term of the project.  
22 If this project goes ahead, depletes those water  
23 supplies, those water supplies can't be used to raise  
24 crops and five million people in Las Vegas can  
25 starve. Thank you.

1 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Larry McCormick.

2 LARRY MCCORMICK: My name is Larry  
3 McCormick. I reside at 7513 Radville,  
4 R-a-d-v-i-l-l-e, Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89129.

5 I'm here today representing myself, my  
6 family, my friends, and Trout Unlimited. I've been  
7 on the board of Trout Unlimited, Southern Nevada  
8 chapter of Trout Unlimited for pretty much probably  
9 11 of the 13 years that Lannie talked about and I've  
10 been on the state board of Trout Unlimited when it  
11 existed.

12 I'm here today to express my concerns about  
13 the impact this SNWA groundwater pumping will create  
14 on the Great Basin area. I, along with many other  
15 volunteers from many different groups, have given  
16 thousands of hours of our time over the last ten  
17 years to help in the reintroduction of the native  
18 Bonneville cutthroat trout in the Great Basin  
19 National Park and surrounding areas. These groups  
20 include Southern Nevada Trout chapter of Trout  
21 Unlimited, National Trout Unlimited, members of the  
22 Las Vegas and Henderson Fire Departments, Ducks  
23 Unlimited, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Mule Deer  
24 Foundation, along with many others and many other  
25 concerned citizens of Southern and Central Nevada.

1           We've raised money to buy equipment for  
2     studying fish habitat and fish genetics. We've spent  
3     many trips to areas assisting national park employees  
4     gather macro-invertebrate information for studies  
5     prior to the reintroduction of the Bonneville  
6     cutthroats. We participated in water sampling and  
7     testing, we've helped in fish surveying and provided  
8     some of the funds to do the genetic testing on fish  
9     to determine their pureness of strain.

10           After many years of surveys, tests and  
11     studies, it was found that Mill Creek in Great Basin  
12     National Park indeed has a pure strain of native  
13     Bonneville cutthroats. Some of those fish were later  
14     introduced into streams where they had been wiped out  
15     by floods or other natural disasters. One example of  
16     this is South Fork of the Big Wash Creek. Other  
17     Bonneville cutthroats were reintroduced into such  
18     streams as Strawberry Creek, the South Fork, the  
19     Baker and Snake Creek where man's earlier blunders  
20     had wiped them out almost to extinction.

21           It was thought that not nonnative fish could  
22     survive along with native fish and provide better  
23     fishing for anglers. After it's too late we learned  
24     that these nonnative fish that we artificially  
25     induced decimated the populations of the native

1 Bonneville to extinction in those streams. It's  
2 hard enough to help them survive natural disasters  
3 without introducing man-made disasters.

4 I personally hiked into and observed some of  
5 these natural springs in this area that creates the  
6 streams that these fish now live in. These springs  
7 and creeks are a beautiful sights to see in person,  
8 and those that haven't visited, you should, it's a  
9 great resource here in our local state.

10 These springs only provide enough water to  
11 create small streams. They're dependent on  
12 underground aquifers, rainwater, rainfall and  
13 snowfall. We all know that the amount of rain and  
14 snowfall has been at drought stages over the last  
15 eight to ten years so they now depend on existing  
16 aquifers more than ever. These springs will dry up  
17 if the aquifers are depleted. These springs will dry  
18 up without these natural springs, and the native  
19 Bonneville cutthroat will die without sufficient  
20 water in these streams.

21 I've heard SNWA say there's enough water to  
22 go around, yet they cannot get ranchers to share  
23 their water rights so they've had to pay exorbitant  
24 amounts to buy out ranches. Why? Because the  
25 ranchers know that once the water is piped out, they

1 will not have enough water to support their livestock  
2 and sustain their ranches. SNWA can assure us all  
3 they want but what if they're wrong?

4 Other areas in the western United States  
5 have been given similar assurances only to find  
6 aquifers dry up enough that the land cannot sustain  
7 normal plant, stock and wildlife. If they're wrong  
8 will they be around to acknowledge they mislead the  
9 public for financial gain? If they're wrong will  
10 they agree to stop pumping before they've completely  
11 wiped out the area? If they're wrong will they be  
12 able to explain to my children, your children and our  
13 grandchildren why they ruined one of Nevada's oldest  
14 living native species, the Bonneville cutthroat  
15 trout?

16 Too many people have spent too many hours  
17 and too many dollars, have done all the work to  
18 restore and enhance the native Bonneville cutthroat  
19 populations in the Great Basin area to go to waste by  
20 letting the SNWA steal their water. I've only  
21 touched on this one area of concern is the one I'm  
22 most familiar with and the one my friends, family and  
23 children have spent the most time trying to save.  
24 There are other areas that I'm sure will be greatly  
25 affected also: Lehman Caves and other surrounding

1 cave systems, whose creation and stunning features  
2 are formed by underground flows of water, the many  
3 different species of plants, birds, wildlife who  
4 depend on the water supply, the farmers, the ranchers  
5 and all the other people who have economic impact in  
6 that area.

7 The national park system was put into place  
8 so man couldn't ruin some of the natural wonders that  
9 exist in the United States of America. Let us not  
10 introduce any other man-made disasters that will  
11 cause more stress and harm to these areas. Please do  
12 not let man and SNWA take a chance at ruining two of  
13 our natural treasures: Great Basin National Park and  
14 the native Bonneville cutthroat trout. Please choose  
15 the No Action alternative for this EIS and keep the  
16 pipelines away from Great Basin National Park, Spring  
17 and Snake Valleys and the White Pine County.

18 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Launce Rake; is  
19 that correct?

20 LAUNCE RAKE: Launce Rake, L-a-u-n-c-e,  
21 R-a-k-e. I'm an independent consultant. I'm the  
22 board member of the Toiyabe chapter of Sierra Club  
23 and I work with several other environmental groups,  
24 including the Great Basin Water Network.

25 I want to note real briefly that I stood

1 with my brothers and sisters in the union movement  
2 many times and I'm proud to do so; however, in this  
3 case I have to say that I strongly support the No  
4 Action alternative. I don't think that carving up  
5 and selling off or trading off our heritage, our  
6 environmental heritage and our recreational heritage  
7 is worth what is referred to as several hundred jobs  
8 to build a pipeline that we don't need.

9           The reason we just don't need it is because  
10 we have an utterly reliable source of water right  
11 now. We have the Colorado River. The Colorado River  
12 is a strong river. The only reason it's in danger is  
13 because of overuse, and not by Las Vegas but by other  
14 consumers along the river.

15           However, what we have been able to do in Las  
16 Vegas, and this speaks to the testament of our  
17 community and our strength of community, it speaks  
18 also to hard work by my friends at the Southern  
19 Nevada Water Authority is we have cut a third of our  
20 use. We have a huge margin now of a hundred thousand  
21 acre feet a year that can supply growth, other needs,  
22 and we can continue that conservation and cut a lot  
23 more water from our use here, our use profile in Las  
24 Vegas.

25           And that's what we should be doing instead

1 of looking to rural Nevada to destroy rural  
2 economies, Native American communities, endangered  
3 species in a great part of the United States. This  
4 is an area the size of Vermont that we're talking  
5 about wrecking, so I think's that's very important to  
6 note.

7 The other point that I wanted to make is  
8 that the BLM has done a very good job of cataloging  
9 the potential impacts of this project. I really  
10 appreciate that work and I appreciate the opportunity  
11 to speak today.

12 I do think that there is one very important  
13 deficiency that should be addressed. Popular media  
14 accounts and conversations that I've had personally  
15 with Pat Mulroy I referred to the relationship  
16 between the Southern Nevada Water Authority and the  
17 development of a huge housing project on the  
18 Lincoln/Clark County line called Coyote Springs  
19 development, Coyote Springs investment project.  
20 We're talking about 150,000 homes that would be built  
21 with nonunion labor up there.

22 The relationship between the water agency  
23 and Coyote Springs investment is very close. In  
24 fact, SNWA has paid Coyote Springs investment tens of  
25 millions of dollars in an ongoing contractual

1 partnership with this developer. I'm concerned that  
2 one of the primary movers for this particular project  
3 is actually the relationship with Coyote Springs, and  
4 I think that that needs to be addressed within the  
5 EIS. So I would hope that the BLM would reference  
6 that, and again I thank you for your time.

7 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Helen Foley.

8 HELEN FOLEY: Good evening. My name is  
9 Helen Foley and I live at 888 Pinehurst Drive, Las  
10 Vegas, Nevada. I am a native Las Vegan but I'm a  
11 fourth generation Nevadan. My father's grandfather  
12 and his father came to Goldfield at the turn of the  
13 century when mining was quite active.

14 My mother's side of the family, her mother  
15 is from Bunkerville, Nevada, just on our northern  
16 border here, and her father is from Lincoln County  
17 and moved to Lincoln County, her great grandfather  
18 moved to Lincoln County in 1864. So I am very  
19 familiar with Nevada and I love it.

20 Tonight I am representing Pardee Homes who  
21 has been building homes in Southern Nevada,  
22 approximately 40,000 homes since 1952, so almost  
23 60 years of actively supporting, working and caring  
24 deeply about Southern Nevada. We support the SNWA  
25 and their groundwater development project.

1           Because 90 percent of our water comes from  
2 the Colorado River, it is not reliable, especially  
3 when we have ten years of drought. I think the  
4 people to blame right now for all of this are our  
5 representatives in the 1920s who sold us very short  
6 on water. Only 300,000 acres feet was given to  
7 Nevada, but then I suppose because we had not  
8 invented air conditioning yet. A lot of people  
9 couldn't imagine that anyone would actually live  
10 here. But we are really the only community of all  
11 the seven western states that are right on the  
12 Colorado River and it has created many, many problems  
13 for us.

14           Ten years ago we had no idea that we would  
15 be in such a drought stricken situation. But it's  
16 very scary, and even last year we were just within a  
17 few feet of having to do some very draconian measures  
18 so that we could turn on our tap water. We believe  
19 that the Southern Nevada Water Authority's  
20 groundwater development project assures water  
21 availability for current and future demands and  
22 provides the necessary protection from drought  
23 conditions.

24           Now we know that when we've had these  
25 hearings before that there's a strong management

1 procedure that will be in place. SNWA will implement  
2 numerous monitoring procedures to determine whether  
3 and how to implement additional environmental  
4 protection measures working very closely with  
5 federal, state and local agencies. That strong  
6 management is what will safeguard the environment in  
7 Eastern Nevada.

8 I was thrilled that the gentleman talked  
9 about the zany idea that Mrs. Pat Mulroy has about  
10 getting water from flood stricken areas, but that's  
11 not the only zany idea she has had. And I have  
12 really got to congratulate her. For many, many years  
13 those that worked on the Colorado River were just  
14 suing each other and nothing was happening, and she  
15 got together with her colleagues and has made some  
16 very, very strong strides forward, reaching  
17 international agreements with Mexico and still  
18 working very hard to see how we might desalt some of  
19 that Pacific Ocean.

20 If you think that Mr. Baker is difficult up  
21 north, it's nothing like trying to get desalt  
22 facilities right off the coast of Carlsbad. It's  
23 almost impossible to do that. California is just  
24 saying no. But that's not stopping Mrs. Mulroy.  
25 From what we understand they might be doing some down

1 in Mexico. But we can't wait for that.

2 And as far as inter-basin transfers, some of  
3 our communities like Carson City and Tonopah were all  
4 built because they had the inter-basin transfers.  
5 This is nothing new for Nevada. Nevada's water  
6 belongs to Nevadans, and so therefore for these  
7 reasons we endorse the SNWA development project, and  
8 please, we request that the right-of-way to develop  
9 this be utilized. Thank you.

10 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: John Hiatt.

11 JOHN HIATT: My name is John Hiatt, that's  
12 spelled H-i-a-t-t. I live at 8180 Placid Street, Las  
13 Vegas, 89123. I'd like to thank the BLM for this  
14 opportunity to speak tonight about this important  
15 project.

16 For over 200 years in this country we  
17 basically kicked the can down the road and did not  
18 worry about what future generations would have to  
19 live off of or the problems they would have to deal  
20 with because of what current generations did with  
21 regard to natural resources. Fortunately about  
22 40 years ago the National Environmental Policy Act  
23 was passed by Congress and that directed federal  
24 agencies to actually make real studies of what  
25 happened on projects proposed for federal land so the

1 decision makers would actually know the impacts of  
2 those projects and what those impacts would have on  
3 future generations.

4 I congratulate the BLM on this particular  
5 document. I think it is very good. I think it  
6 fairly lays out the impacts. The point of this  
7 exercise is to determine whether the BLM will issue a  
8 right-of-way. And that's somewhat complicated by the  
9 Lincoln County Land Conservation Act of 2004 which  
10 actually directed them to issue a right-of-way in  
11 Clark and Lincoln counties.

12 The document states that this is really not  
13 a point of decision for them, that it's mandated. I  
14 think that is not a point of settled law. That needs  
15 to be mentioned in the final document, that there's a  
16 conflict between FLPMA, the Federal Land Policy  
17 Management Act, which established the BLM which  
18 mandates sustainable use of our federal lands, and  
19 the 2004 Lincoln County Act, which basically directs  
20 them to issue the right-of-way regardless of what the  
21 consequences are.

22 In White Pine County there is no such  
23 directive and the BLM is free to make a decision  
24 either to approve one of the alternatives or the No  
25 Action alternative. I would strongly urge them to

1 take the No Action alternative. The consequences,  
2 the long-term consequences of this project are pretty  
3 evident from the studies.

4 In Southern Spring Valley we would see  
5 potentially greater than 200 foot drawdown in the  
6 water table over the next 75 years. That basically  
7 means the end of all of the vegetation in that valley  
8 with significant loss not only of wildlife, so on,  
9 but very negative consequences in terms of turning  
10 that into a dustbowl. And those are things that the  
11 BLM is mandated by the act of 1976 which created the  
12 agency to address.

13 So to reiterate, I strongly urge you to pick  
14 the No Action alternative but also to have a  
15 discussion in the final document about the conflict  
16 between the 1976 organic act for BLM, which mandates  
17 sustainable development, and the 2004 Lincoln County  
18 Land Act, and hopefully deny or pick the No Action  
19 alternative for the entire project. Thank you.

20 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Howard Watts.

21 HOWARD WATTS: All right. Good evening. So  
22 for the record my name is Howard Watts, H-o-w-a-r-d,  
23 W-a-t-t-s. And I reside at 7716 Custom Weave Court,  
24 Las Vegas, Nevada 89149. It's one of those funky  
25 subdivision names.

1 I'm here today representing the Progressive  
2 Leadership Alliance of Nevada and don't intend to use  
3 all my time. So first I'll get right to the point.  
4 We absolutely support the No Action alternative in  
5 regards to how the BLM should move forward on this.

6 And in terms of other people who have spoken  
7 in favor of that alternative, we just kind of want to  
8 second a lot of those opinions. We think that you  
9 should look more into some of the economic impacts  
10 that the pipeline may have.

11 And we encourage you to extend the period  
12 for comments and feedback because this is going to  
13 have long lasting repercussions, and the longer that  
14 we have to gain input and criticism for this project,  
15 the stronger that the final EIS will be and the  
16 stronger the decision made as a result will be.

17 You know, there's only a couple other points  
18 I want to bring up. One is that a couple of speakers  
19 that came up here didn't seem to have a really good  
20 grasp on water rights and water law. The phrase that  
21 Nevada's water belongs to all of Nevada or belongs to  
22 Southern Nevada isn't true. Nevada's water belongs  
23 to the people that have the rights to that water.

24 And those water rights can be problematic at  
25 times. It's not a perfect system. But in this case

1 and in some cases it's all that is keeping some of  
2 these rural ranchers, it's all that's keep some of  
3 these underrepresented interests from having a way to  
4 contest this pipeline, which is going to have, which  
5 the draft EIS has shown is going to have really  
6 significant impacts in these valleys.

7 And the other thing that I wanted to say is  
8 that, you know, as some other speakers have  
9 mentioned, the BLM was created, along with several  
10 other agencies, as a steward for public lands, to  
11 preserve these lands, to make sure that they're used  
12 but that they're used in a sustainable manner so that  
13 certain elements of them can be enjoyed and used in  
14 recreational ways for generations to come.

15 And so that's why the No Action alternative  
16 is the only alternative that the BLM should pursue  
17 because any other alternative that allows for pumping  
18 of the water from these valleys is going to result in  
19 destruction of that land, and even acts to try to  
20 remediate that or mitigate that after the fact is not  
21 going to return the Great Basin to the greatness that  
22 it has right now.

23 So once again, I urge the BLM to address  
24 some of these concerns, extend the comment period,  
25 and at the end of the day deny the right-of-way to

1 the Southern Nevada Water Authority. Thank you.

2 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Linda Schmidt.

3 LINDA SCHMIDT: Hi, my name is Linda  
4 Schmidt, S-c-h-m-i-d-t. My address is Post Office  
5 Box 237 in Blue Diamond, 89004.

6 I am speaking for myself and I'm a volunteer  
7 with Food and Water Watch. I'm concerned about this  
8 project because of the impact that it will have.

9 First of all, I don't think that we have  
10 done enough with water conservation in this city and  
11 in this state. I have children in Oregon, and  
12 everybody knows how much rainwater there is in  
13 Oregon, yet the people in Oregon do not waste water.  
14 They have very strict guidelines.

15 The second point is I request that the BLM  
16 extend the comment time. This is such a huge  
17 document and very complicated, and I really very much  
18 appreciate the public opportunity to speak and to  
19 study and think about this, but I think we need a  
20 little more time.

21 I'm also concerned about the rights of the  
22 underrepresented faction in the state: The  
23 indigenous people, the wildlife. The wildlife and  
24 the natural areas are for all of us to enjoy, and  
25 when we destroy a large portion of the state, we have

1 lost something very valuable for everyone.

2 And I heard the comment made by  
3 Mr. McAnallen that there's unused water in Baker.  
4 Well, I am sure that the Baker area is making very  
5 good use of their water, and I'm sure that there's  
6 wildlife and plant life that's using the water, and I  
7 don't think that we need to rob it from them.

8 I also heard the comment that we need to  
9 protect Southern Nevada from drought. Well, I would  
10 like to protect Southern Nevada from drought but I'm  
11 not in favor of doing it at the expense of everyone  
12 else, so I would urge the BLM to support a No Action  
13 alternative. Thanks.

14 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Jayne Feshold.  
15 Miss Feshold, are you here? Perhaps not.  
16 F-e-s-h-o-l-d and it looks like Jayne, from Food and  
17 Water Watch. No?

18 Randy Upton.

19 RANDY UPTON: Randy Upton, U-p-t-o-n, 2805  
20 Merit Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada 89102. I'm president  
21 of the Las Vegas Fly Fishing club.

22 In 1989 we filed protests against the  
23 utilization of water from Spring Valley, Cave Valley  
24 and associated areas. I have refiled those protests  
25 back in May of this year. Our intent at that time

1 was we understand the fragility of the water there,  
2 of course. Taking it out will poorly affect the  
3 wildlife and economics of the area.

4 BLM's interests is really not in the  
5 economics. They don't care what happens to them.  
6 Their charge is to protect our lands. And as a  
7 citizen of these United States, please protect my  
8 lands. All science points to the fact that as the  
9 water is diminished, wildlife and everything else in  
10 the area will be not beneficially affected.

11 So other things that have not necessarily  
12 been considered are the fact that the Great Basin is  
13 indeed a basin. It's a closed system. You pull the  
14 water out, it's not going back. So unless there's a  
15 plan by which to reestablish that water sometime,  
16 then this doesn't seem like a good idea. All the  
17 science that I have seen points to the fact that this  
18 will diminish the affects.

19 The other impacts of course has to be  
20 considered by BLM's right-of-way access is the  
21 306 miles of road, the five pumping stations, all the  
22 power line access that's going to be required to be  
23 put in there, pipelines up to 84 inches. This is  
24 going to destroy the desert. I've been a sportsman  
25 in that area for 50-some years. I've seen the

1 impacts of little things that occurred over time.  
2 This is just beyond the pale.

3 So our position, as the Las Vegas Fly  
4 Fishing Club and as a representative organization for  
5 the Fly Fishing Federation of America, is we request  
6 that there is a No Action position taken by BLM.  
7 Actually we would prefer a denial with prejudice, but  
8 our end goal is we found that when you take away  
9 water, fish die. Try it at home.

10 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Lynn Davis.

11 LYNN DAVIS: I'm Lynn Davis, L-y-n-n,  
12 D-a-v-i-s, 10300 West Charleston, 13-25, Las Vegas,  
13 89135.

14 I'm Lynn Davis. I'm the senior program  
15 manager with the Nevada Field Office of the National  
16 Parks Conservation Association. NPCA's mission is to  
17 protect and enhance America's national parks for  
18 present and future generations. Founded in 1919,  
19 currently with more than 325,000 members,  
20 headquarters in our nation's capitol and 23 regional  
21 field offices, NPCA plays a crucial role in  
22 protecting America's treasured parks.

23 NPCA is here today representing the  
24 interests and protection of Great Basin National Park  
25 on the eastern border of Nevada. Southern Nevada

1 Water Authority's pipeline proposal would pump  
2 precious groundwater in Spring Valley to the west of  
3 Great Basin National Park and Snake Valley to the  
4 east of the national park.

5 Groundwater modeling tests over the past  
6 couple of years conducted by the US Geological  
7 Survey, the National Park Service, and independent  
8 organizations raised all sorts of questions that  
9 SNWA's proposal will have on the national park.

10 Like all national parks, Great Basin  
11 National Park is a special place. The park is not  
12 only exceptionally scenic, it covers a broad range of  
13 recreational opportunities. The park contains a wide  
14 range of ecosystems that vary from desert to alpine,  
15 one of a kind endemic species, including 4,000 to  
16 5,000 year old Bristlecone pine.

17 Notably the park was first recognized for a  
18 notable cave system which relies on an underground  
19 water system. In this cave system recently unique  
20 one-of-a-kind species have been found and recently  
21 documented. NPCA registers grave concern that the  
22 national park's cave system will be harmed along with  
23 these very new endemic species. In addition the  
24 park's pristine air quality and dark night skies are  
25 among the best in the nation.

1           In 2004 and 2005, Great Basin was found to  
2   be among the darkest places in the lower 48 states  
3   giving park visitors a rare and very uncommon  
4   experience to experience starry night skies. The  
5   park's unspoiled air quality is due significantly to  
6   its remote distance from urban areas and from major  
7   pollution sources, as well as its location as in  
8   regards to prevailing winds. Lack of pollutant  
9   particles which scatter atmospheric light and  
10   increase sky glow provide park visitors with some of  
11   the best star gazing experiences.

12           SNWA's groundwater pumping plans, however,  
13   potentially threaten this resource. Pumping around  
14   the national park has a strong likelihood of  
15   affecting and possibly drying up stabilizing  
16   vegetation in valleys that surround the national  
17   park. In all likelihood this could create a dustbowl  
18   situation threatening the economic eco-tourism  
19   opportunities in the area and practically putting  
20   this national park at risk.

21           NPCA will be providing a more in-depth  
22   statement with documentation during this comment  
23   period. We request that No Action be taken as  
24   regards to SNWA's proposal to pump groundwater near  
25   Great Basin National Park on behalf of all Americans

1 who value and cherish our national park system.

2 Thank you.

3 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: I'm afraid I'm  
4 guessing at this one but I believe it's Charles  
5 Musser. Is that correct? Was I close, Mr. Musser?

6 CHARLES MUSSER: That's close enough.

7 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: You make me feel  
8 better about my own handwriting. Thank you.

9 CHARLES MUSSER: My name is Charles Musser,  
10 M-u-s-s-e-r, 2304 Saddle Bill Court, North Las Vegas,  
11 89084.

12 I've lived in this valley some 75 years, and  
13 when I was a kid we lived out on West Charleston. We  
14 had a well that flowed. It didn't need a pump back  
15 in 1930s, forties. And when I was a little kid, you  
16 know, down on the corner of Valley View and  
17 Charleston there was a pipe coming out of the ground;  
18 the water came up six feet out of that pipe, no pump.  
19 And then the water district started putting their  
20 straws in the ground, that disappeared. And that's  
21 right where the water district office went on that  
22 corner. Then on below there's the McNeal Ranch with  
23 some ponds there and some springs. Those are all  
24 gone. The old Bell Ranch, they're all gone.

25 Our recreation in this valley has moved out

1 of the valley. There is no recreation in the valley  
2 for the outdoorsman now. I was up last weekend up in  
3 Spring Valley Park. And up there at the Eagle Valley  
4 Reservoir the campground was absolutely full of Clark  
5 County cars. Every foot around that lake was covered  
6 with a fisherman, except for Dundee there, you know.  
7 Fishermen from Clark County up there trying to get  
8 some recreation in.

9 And I went up to Upper Spring Valley, Fred  
10 Baker ranch up there, known that family a long time,  
11 and there's a little puddle up there on a place  
12 called Silver Creek. And here's a Henderson resident  
13 up there paddling his canoe around there. Dwayne  
14 Potter, you know, he was up there paddling his canoe  
15 around that little pond. Went all the way from here  
16 up there to do that. That's what we do.

17 And if you take, the little spring creeks  
18 are going to disappear if you start putting straws in  
19 the ground up there. And so I would say to you  
20 that's a pristine area, it needs to stay pristine.  
21 And if you take away the water up there, it just  
22 becomes a bunch of dirt. Wilderness and pristine  
23 areas without water is nothing more than a bunch of  
24 dirt.

25 And so I would urge you to take No Action

1 and save that for the citizens of Nevada. Take those  
2 ranches the water district has bought, turn them over  
3 to the state park system and develop them for local  
4 and all Nevadans to have a place to go for  
5 recreation. Thank you.

6 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Judy Treichel.

7 JUDY TREICHEL: My name is Judy Treichel,  
8 T-r-e-i-c-h-e-l. I live at 4587 Ermine Court,  
9 E-r-m-i-n-e, Las Vegas, 89147.

10 I'm the executive director of the Nevada  
11 Nuclear Waste Task Force and we opposed Yucca  
12 Mountain because we want to save what's good in  
13 Nevada for Nevadans, for the Native Americans and for  
14 everything that it was here for, and I feel the same  
15 way about this water project. There is no extra  
16 water in Nevada. And I would ask that the No Action  
17 alternative be adopted and the right-of-way not be  
18 given for this project.

19 I agree that we need to recover from the  
20 recession, as was earlier stated. I support the idea  
21 that Nevada now has the opportunity to become a  
22 leader in renewable energy as well as Southern Nevada  
23 becoming a leading center of water conservation and  
24 innovation for sustainable living and responsible  
25 growth.

1           Guessing what the water conditions will be  
2     in the future is really a gamble. Over the past  
3     couple of years we've had some horrendous weather  
4     surprises. Recharges of any of the aquifers in the  
5     west cannot be guaranteed. Transferring water from  
6     one community to another is wrong. There's no extra  
7     water. Very likely the long-term outcome could be  
8     that all of Nevada becomes dry.

9           Please do not grant this right-of-way and do  
10    adopt the No Action alternative. The problem must be  
11    solved by this community without the sacrifice of  
12    another. Thank you.

13           FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Ann Brauer.

14           ANN BRAUER: My name is Ann Brauer, no E on  
15    Ann, B-r-a-u-e-r. I live in Indian Springs, 89018.  
16    I am active with the Toiyabe chapter of the Sierra  
17    Club and the Great Basin Water Network, but I'm here  
18    to represent myself and my family. We have lived in  
19    Nevada for 46 years.

20           First of all, I would request that the  
21    comment period is not adequate and needs to be  
22    extended to at least 180 days. It's a 5,000 page  
23    document with the input from 32 agencies and 23  
24    tribal groups involving hundreds of people and taking  
25    six years to prepare. We can't read that fast and

1 analyze that fast.

2 Secondly, I would suggest that the scope of  
3 the DEIS is not adequate, and there is reason for a  
4 supplemental DEIS that covers the entire project, all  
5 the well fields, lateral lines, power lines, the  
6 entire project plus the new idea of distributed  
7 pumping, which was not on the docket when this was  
8 started.

9 The DEIS fails to address in any real terms  
10 the cost of this project. How much will it cost to  
11 build the entire project, not just the ditch and the  
12 pipeline. And where will the money come from to pay  
13 for it? Money costs money. Who will pay for the  
14 project that is several times the budget of the State  
15 of Nevada? Should we trust that Southern Nevada  
16 Water Authority will be able to do this when they  
17 have gone and spent inflated millions of dollars to  
18 buy ranches to try to force their way into Spring  
19 Valley?

20 What are the costs of the monitoring,  
21 management and mitigation oversight and enforcement?  
22 How can we be sure the monitoring and mitigation will  
23 be adequate? Who will see the data? Will it be  
24 publicly available in a timely manner? There's more  
25 than one way to analyze the data and it needs to be

1 out there.

2 The need for the project is not sufficiently  
3 addressed in this DEIS. This has gone from a stupid  
4 idea, to drought protection and now to a possible  
5 future need. There are alternatives that are far  
6 more viable, far less detrimental. Why aren't these  
7 examined in the DEIS?

8 Changes in climate change are not addressed,  
9 the consequences of climate change on this. This  
10 water in the White Pine, Lincoln and the valleys up  
11 there is not a reliable source of water for Southern  
12 Nevada. It will not be long-term. It will not be  
13 permanent. When it's gone, it's gone. There is no  
14 excess water in these valleys.

15 There are too many irreversible and  
16 irretrievable consequences associated with this  
17 project. I believe that the DEIS is deficient,  
18 incomplete and premature. The cart has been put  
19 before the horse. SNWA has no water rights, and as  
20 far as we can see does not have the financial  
21 resources to build this.

22 Based on the many topics inadequately  
23 addressed in the DEIS, which have been pointed out by  
24 many speakers today, there should be a supplemental  
25 draft EIS before the final decision is reached;

1     however, if BLM is determined to rush to a decision  
2     based on the current document, then it is obvious  
3     that the only possibility is the No Action  
4     alternative. That is the only course possible if BLM  
5     is to fulfill its stated mission to sustain the  
6     health, diversity and productivity of public lands  
7     for the use and enjoyment of present and especially  
8     future generations. Thank you.

9             FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Linda Overbey.

10            LINDA OVERBEY: I'm Linda Overbey,  
11     O-v-e-r-b-e-y, Overbey, 2256 Grand Clover Lane, Las  
12     Vegas, 89156.

13            I really had decided I would write a comment  
14     and put it in later but some things I heard tonight  
15     made me want to stand up, and I have told myself that  
16     I have to make a vow to be active. And so despite my  
17     verbal dyslexia, I'm going to say these things.

18            I had written out things about the dust that  
19     you're own report says is going to be created. And I  
20     appreciate the fact that you created this study and I  
21     could read it, but one of my points was that I  
22     thought it was sort of a funny extreme. I was going  
23     to say that who knows if 50 years down the line will  
24     people be suing you for knowingly putting dust into  
25     the atmosphere that caused asthma and lung cancer.

1 Come to find out they did that in Owens Valley.  
2 They've already sued the water district in Los  
3 Angeles for creating all those things, so that was  
4 taken.

5 All my other good ideas you guys already  
6 got. You said those things for me. My real issues  
7 are I'm union and I appreciate what the AFL-CIO says  
8 and I understand their point of view, but I don't  
9 think that we can fix the economic crisis by acting  
10 in haste to build this pipeline. I think that now is  
11 the time for Las Vegas to be a vanguard city in water  
12 sustainability. I think that jobs can be created  
13 that way in retrofitting buildings and creating water  
14 basins and many other ways. Like I said, I'm not a  
15 scientist but I see these things.

16 I think that we're responding to the  
17 potential of water crisis in an antiquated way. I  
18 think it's kind of like when a city is sprawling and  
19 sprawling and has smog and traffic gridlock they say  
20 let's build more roads when they should be building  
21 up their public transport. You know, it's  
22 antiquated.

23 By the time that this pipeline is done,  
24 we'll already be expecting it and we'll have  
25 allocated all that water usage. We'll be using it.

1 We need to learn to live within our water means. And  
2 I think that we're creative as a species and we can  
3 do that; whereas, the animals and plants that are up  
4 there can't make those adjustments. You know, let's  
5 not create an ugly desert up there. It's gorgeous up  
6 there. It's the antidote to this place. Let's leave  
7 it as it is.

8 And, you know, the fellow that said that  
9 water rights are for everyone, I don't know the legal  
10 standing of that. I know that I feel like it's  
11 morally wrong for us to say that, you know. What  
12 happens to the farmers and ranchers and the fishermen  
13 and the plants and the mustangs and all those  
14 creatures that are up there is nothing compared to  
15 our growth. To me we're big enough. I know that I  
16 can't stop the growth here, and I'm not antigrowth, I  
17 just think that we need to be sensible about these  
18 things.

19 And, you know, I don't think that destroying  
20 the area up there is worth the few little jobs that  
21 it will create, the few temporary jobs it will  
22 create. Thanks. I really appreciate your time.

23 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Ed Uehling.

24 ED UEHLING: Yes, my name is Ed Uehling, Ed,  
25 E-d, Uehling, U-e-h-l-i-n-g. I live at 3418 Oneida

1 Way in Las Vegas.

2 This project is premised on two premises  
3 that are both lies. The number one premise is that  
4 there is a drought. The number two premises is  
5 there's no other solution to this. So I want to look  
6 at those two issues because everything depends on  
7 those two lies that the water authority is telling  
8 us.

9 The Colorado River flows within 20 miles of  
10 Las Vegas, about 20 miles from Las Vegas, and it  
11 flows. The flow in the river ranges between about  
12 6.5 million acre feet a year to about 8.5 million  
13 acre feet a year, an average flow of around 7 million  
14 acre feet. That is not a drought. The drought is in  
15 brain cells of people who are using, allowing  
16 millions, about four million, over four million acre  
17 feet of water to be pulled out of the Colorado River  
18 and poured onto farms in the middle of the desert to  
19 raise alfalfa or cotton or some crops like this that  
20 are totally uneconomical.

21 They're uneconomical because these people  
22 are able to steal the water or take the water out of  
23 the river and just pour it on the land. They don't  
24 use any conservation, modern conservation irrigation  
25 procedures; they use twelfth century irrigation

1     technology. And there is plenty of water in the  
2     Colorado River, up to seven million acre feet.  
3     Nevada was allocated 300,000 acre feet, about five  
4     percent of the flow of the river.

5             So that gets to my second subject, the  
6     second premise on which this is based, that there is  
7     no other solution. That's just total nonsense. All  
8     they have to do is just change some of the  
9     regulations of how the Colorado River water is dealt  
10    with. There are many ways of dealing with it. And  
11    all this is is one more subterfuge of the federal  
12    government. The federal government created this  
13    problem in the first place and now the federal  
14    government, through BLM, is going to create a second  
15    huge problem by denuding the landscape in Northern  
16    Nevada.

17            But there's a solution. It's very easy for  
18    the federal government to adopt. There are many  
19    solutions, in fact. One is the Southern Nevada Water  
20    Authority could be permitted to buy farms in the  
21    Imperial Valley or in the Arizona valleys. They're  
22    using these incredible sums of water and substitute  
23    water here. But the federal rules don't permit that.  
24    We can't do that. They can change other rules but  
25    they can't change rules like that.

1           They can do desalting in Mexico and  
2       substitute water. They can, as stated here, they can  
3       substitute water from the north. One thing that's  
4       been very effective in Las Vegas where Pat Mulroy has  
5       raised the cost of water from what, about a dollar a  
6       thousand gallons to now as much as \$4 per thousand  
7       gallons is the federal government can simply charge  
8       for the water that's taken out of the river. That  
9       will immediately fill up Lake Mead. It will  
10      immediately produce all the water that Las Vegas  
11      could ever need because the farmers who are growing  
12      alfalfa with their five feet of water that they get,  
13      that they pour on this land, or in some cases some of  
14      the farms down there put 20 feet of water, that's the  
15      height of this ceiling, on their crops. So if these  
16      exchanges were allowed to be made, this problem is  
17      very easily solved.

18           What hasn't been discussed, some of the  
19      things that haven't been discussed are how much is it  
20      going to cost for the construction of this? The  
21      water authority is already \$5 billion in debt. They  
22      can't meet their own budget. They're spending their  
23      reserves just to be able to operate this year, and  
24      they only have to transport water 20 miles. How much  
25      is it going to cost to transport water 300 miles for

1 this agency? This is a coverup for the total  
2 incompetence of the Las Vegas Valley Water District  
3 and Southern Nevada Water Authority, and it's too bad  
4 that BLM is supporting that. Thank you.

5 FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: Dr. Jacob Paz.

6 DR. JACOB PAZ: Good evening. Dr. Jacob  
7 Paz. I have two comments to make. When I read the  
8 environmental impact statement, I found it fermented.  
9 It does not very well discuss the cumulative affect  
10 and the cumulative impact of the component which are  
11 agriculture, groundwater. It's like a chain reaction  
12 and this must be updated.

13 Second, I propose that this alternative of  
14 the pipeline should withdraw and have an alternative  
15 pipeline for this reservation of water taken from the  
16 Atlantic Ocean. Using solar energy, you can work  
17 with Arizona and you will have both electricity and  
18 water and it's much more cost effective and I'm sure  
19 Senator Reid would sponsor it. Thank you.

20 DR. MICHAEL DWYER: That was our last person  
21 who signed up to speak. We have a little bit of time  
22 left. Does anyone else want to come up and make a  
23 statement? If not, thank you again so much for being  
24 here.

25 DEAN BAKER: One of the things that was

1 talked about is the ownership of the water, and I  
2 mentioned that the Donner family came in 1862. That  
3 water in Burbank Meadows was divided before there  
4 were any state laws but largely before there were any  
5 states, either Utah or Nevada, and they didn't know  
6 which one it was going to be. And those rights are  
7 rights that were established before their state laws.  
8 And the state laws say they're vested rights so they  
9 predate the taking of water by the State of Nevada.  
10 So that is a different thing.

11 The water costs in Las Vegas, the Las Vegas  
12 people should look carefully at the actual cost of  
13 water when they have taken ten percent of the land  
14 sales money, you get part of the sales tax money on  
15 the connection fees rather than the real costs of the  
16 water to the people, and they should look at the  
17 costs of this.

18 And I so strongly believe that this pipeline  
19 and trying to get the water would be a disaster worse  
20 for Las Vegas than it will be for us in the way that  
21 it will hurt many thousands of people because I do  
22 not believe, my experience says that they can't keep  
23 that pipeline full and the people will be dependent  
24 on it so they'll try to keep whatever they can get or  
25 take it further to get it.

1           And the Owens Valley, I have slips here  
2 again, but when they started the pumping of water in  
3 1970, their immediate drawdowns in the valley were  
4 such that created the environmental problems. And  
5 when you look at their drawdown springs and what it  
6 did, in was an immediate impact that shows again a  
7 place, and Owens Valley is against the Sierra Pacific  
8 which gets many times, many, many times the water  
9 that falls in the driest part of Nevada. So to think  
10 that this pipeline will work for them, I think it  
11 will hurt Southern Nevada. Anyway, thank you.

12           DR. MICHAEL DWYER: Anybody else? I'll go  
13 ahead and close the hearing. Thanks again.

14           FACILITATOR JOHN GODEC: If I can just  
15 mention, if someone would like to make a comment  
16 privately with our court reporter, we will be here  
17 for a few minutes. And if someone would like a hard  
18 copy of the full executive summary, we have some  
19 copies at the table. Please feel free to ask one of  
20 our folks for one. Thanks very much.

21                   (Thereupon the proceedings  
22                   were concluded at 7:19 p.m.)

23                   \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

24

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF NEVADA )

SS:

COUNTY OF NYE )

I, Deborah Ann Hines, certified court reporter, do hereby certify that I took down in shorthand (Stenotype) all of the proceedings had in the before-entitled matter at the time and place indicated; and that thereafter said shorthand notes were transcribed into typewriting at and under my direction and supervision and the foregoing transcript constitutes a full, true and accurate record of the proceedings had.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed my hand this 14th day of September, 2011.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deborah Ann Hines, CCR #473, RPR